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REPORT ON GARRISON'S KING MURDER THEORIES

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[G. Borovik report]

[Text] A prisoner called Charlie Stephens is incarcerated in a prison in Memphis, Shelby County, in the extreme south of Tennessee. Certainly for a prisoner the conditions of his life are somewhat strange. His cell is an individual room with all comforts supplied. It is equipped with airconditioning, television, radio, and a telephone. Three times a day he is brought food which has been specially prepared by the prison cook. He has at his disposal papers, journals, magazines, and books. Apart from anything else, he has the assistant sheriff's company for 24 hours a day.

The fact is that Charlie Stephens is the only person in the world who saw the murderer, or, more precisely, the alleged murderer of Dr Martin Luther King a few minutes after the shot had been fired in Memphis on 4 April this year. The 57-year-old Stephens, a former mechanic, rented a furnished room on South Main Street on the same day. He saw a person who was being shown the neighboring furnished room, No 5. Stephens was able to recall his clean-shaven cheeks, his long pointed nose, and his square chin. The lodger was dressed in an evening suit and was wearing a white shirt and a dark narrow tie. His fairly thick hair was combed straight back.

Then Stephens heard the person from No 5 room go into the shared bathroom which was next to Stephens' room. He remembered this all the more clearly as the occupant of room No 4 attempted to get into the bathroom but found it locked. Then Stephens heard a loud shot. He immediately went into the hall and saw the lodger from room No 5 already at the door leading to the street. In his hands he had something wrapped up in a paper.

At all events, this is what Stephens told reporters. The next morning the police began to question him. The interrogation lasted several days. But when the police let him go, the former mechanic drank himself sick, was picked up in a gutter, and taken away to the police. But the police, knowing what kind of person he was, released him. The district prosecutor, having found out about this, insisted that Stephens be kept in prison lest they should be deprived a key witness before the beginning of legal proceedings against Earl Ray, accused of assassinating Dr Martin Luther King.

That is how former mechanic Charlie Stephens came to be in prison. People say he is unhappy in prison: he has never read a book in his life, he cannot be phoned, and he is not allowed to drink. He has no glass. Because of this Stephens tries during all his waking hours to make his companion, the deputy sheriff, understand that he, Stephens, is an alcoholic. But there are millions of alcoholics and nobody imprisons them. If you incarcerate Stephens, you should not deprive him of his civil rights, so give him something to drink. After all, he is not responsible for what took place on 4 April in the house on South Main Street.

The authorities explain to him that prison laws do not permit drinks to be given to prisoners and he cannot be released from prison because he is the only witness. He might be killed or trapped, or might simply fall under an automobile after one of his drinking bouts.

I have told you about the "key witness" for the prosecution because recently more and more questions are being raised around Ray, the alleged killer of Doctor King.

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The view finds increasing support that in all probability Ray was only a decoy and someone else did the shooting. New Orleans District Prosecutor Jim Garrison spoke about this recently and said that the killing of Martin Luther King was carried out by the same people who murdered John and Robert Kennedy. In an interview with the free press, [as published] he named the CIA and American reaction as the chief organizers of all three murders. The future will show how the alcoholic Charlie Stephens will help to untangle the complex situation.

I remember yet another interview which I and TASS correspondent S. Losev had with Jim Garrison nearly 1 and a half years ago. Jim Garrison told us the story of John Kennedy's death and then said: "To begin with, the CIA prepared for Fidel Castro's assassination. They did this with the aid of reactionaries from the southern states and counterrevolutionary Cuban emigrants. The machine for the assassination was built and put into action. However, they did not succeed in killing him. Lee Harvey Oswald did not obtain a visa at that time to Cuba. But the machine had already been launched. It resembles a rocket. It is launched into the sky with a precise target to strike. But suddenly all controlof the rocket is lost. The rocket flies in an arbitrary course and hits a completely different target. This was also the case with Kennedy;s assassination: once the machine had been launched there was no way of stopping it."

There is a special reason why I remember Jim Garrison!s words. Recently the police found an ammunition depot on an isolated farm called the "dead road" near New York. The ammunition consisted of half a ton of dynamite, several reels of fuse wire, rifles, pistols, and even a mortar. Apart from this the police discovered many complete sets of uniforms worn by the U.S. Marines in Vietnam. But instead of American identification marks on the tunics, they found silver crosses which had been sewn on and the words: "The Cuban Offensive Brigade." This organization was formed by Cuban counterrevolutionaries last year and its aim is to overthrow the Cuban Government and to assassinate Fidel Castro. A group of Cuban emigre counterrevolutionaries led by specialists held secret training and preparation exercises on this farm. It is hardly likely that it will become known who these specialists were who trained to kill. But the police believe that it was this group which was responsible for 14 bombs that went off in New York in recent months, damaging many foreign consulates, UN legations, and tourist offices. As is clear, the trained diversionists decided to hold practical exercises in the area and chose for these purposes New York, which is the nearest large city.

It is quite possible that once again somebody will prepare to launch a "rocket." Even now it is striking unexpected targets, but is not the CIA itself a rocket over which the U.S. Government has lost control?

STURUA COMMENTS ON DEMOCRATIC CONVENTION

Moscow IZVESTIYA 27 Aug 68 p 2 L

[Article by M. Sturua: "The Curtain Rises"]

[Text] The brain center of the Democratic Party convention in Chicago is at the Hilton hotel. Vice President Humphrey has established his headquarters on the 24th floor of the hotel, while Senator McCarthy has established his headquarters on the 15th floor. The newspaper kitchen is operating in the basement. Above it in the banqueting halls the ordinary kitchen is at work. The hotel is picketed by demonstrators around the clock.

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